

Message Text

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ORIGIN DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 IO-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

USSAGE JCRC NAKON PHANOM TH

CH USDEL FPJMT SAIGON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, LA, VS, VN, CB

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT ON POW/MIA'S.

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT AS RELEASED BY
WHITE HOUSE NEWS OFFICE SEPT. 18. BEGIN TEXT:

" I WELCOME THE NEWS THAT MR. EMMET KAY HAS BEEN RE-
LEASED AS PART OF THE PRISONER EXCHANGE IN LAOS. THIS
PRISONER RELEASE ARRANGED BY THE COALITION GOVERNMENT IN
LAOS IS A MAJOR POSITIVE STEP IN CARRYING OUT THE VIENTIANE
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ACCORDS WHICH MARKED THE END OF THE WAR IN THAT COUNTRY

LAST YEAR. WE ARE ENCOURAGED TO SEE THIS DEVELOPMENT AND HOPE IT WILL BE FOLLOWED BY OTHER POSITIVE STEPS.

I WANT TO EXPRESS MY PERSONAL CONCERN ABOUT THE MANY AMERICANS WHO REMAIN UNACCOUNTED FOR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. AS VICE PRESIDENT, AND DURING MY TIME IN CONGRESS, I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH THE FAMILIES OF A NUMBER OF OUR MEN IN THIS CATEGORY. I HAVE THE HIGHEST REGARD FOR THE STRENGTH AND COURAGE THESE FAMILIES HAVE SHOWN IN THE LONG PERIOD SINCE THEIR LOVED ONES WERE LOST.

IT HAS NOW BEEN MORE THAN 18 MONTHS SINCE THE PARIS AGREEMENT ON VIETNAM WAS SIGNED ON JANUARY 27, 1973. IN ADDITION TO PRISONER EXCHANGE, THAT AGREEMENT CONTAINED

SPECIFIC PROVISIONS ON ACCOUNTING FOR THE MISSING AND THE RETURN OF THE REMAINS OF THE DEAD. THE RECORD SHOWS THAT THERE HAS BEEN ALMOST NO COMPLIANCE WITH THESE HUMANITARIAN PROVISIONS. ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT OF NORTH VIETNAM HAS RETURNED THE REMAINS OF 23 AMERICAN SERVICE-MEN IDENTIFIED AS HAVING DIED IN CAPTIVITY, THERE HAS BEEN NO PROGRESS ON ACCOUNTING FOR THE MISSING AND NO FURTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE RETURN OF THE REMAINS OF THE DEAD.

THE COMMUNIST SIDE HAS REFUSED TO PERMIT SEARCH IN AREAS UNDER THEIR CONTROL FOR CRASH SITES, GRAVES AND OTHER INFORMATION ON THE MIA'S. WE ARE PREPARED TO CARRY OUT SUCH SEARCHES BY UNARMED AMERICAN TEAMS, OR WE STAND READY NOW AS WE HAVE IN THE PAST TO DISCUSS ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CONDUCT OF SUCH SEARCHES BY TEAMS FROM NEUTRAL COUNTRIES, THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS, OTHER HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS, OR BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES. THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT WE GET ON WITH THIS JOB NOW.

THE FAMILIES OF OUR MEN HAVE WAITED TOO LONG ALREADY FOR THIS INFORMATION, AND I AM SURE THAT FAMILIES OF THOSE OF OTHER NATIONALITIES WHO REMAIN UNACCOUNTED FOR HAVE A SIMILAR DESIRE TO KNOW THE FATE OF THEIR LOVED ONE. SURELY THERE SHOULD BE NO POLITICAL OR MILITARY CON-

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TROVERSY ABOUT THIS HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM, AND I CALL FOR RENEWED EFFORTS TO RESOLVE IT. END OF TEXT." KISSINGER

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